

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 HA-05 CA-01 VO-05 JUSE-00  
CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00  
NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 INSE-00 /090 W  
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R 161045Z JUN 78  
FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6390  
INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA  
USMISSION GENEVA  
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 17357

EO 11652: GDS  
TAGS: SREF  
SUBJ: INDOCHINESE REFUGEES - LOWMAN'S MEETING WITH MAJGEN  
FUNANGCHALOEI ANIRUTTHEWA

REF STATE 151574

1. SUMMARY: FUANGCHALOEI IS CHAIRMAN OF AN INTER AGENCY COMMITTEE UNDER THAI NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL AEGIS. COMMITTEE IS PLANNING FOR EVENTUAL LOCAL SETTLEMENT OF INDOCHINESE REFUGEES IN THAILAND. LOWMAN AND REFUGEE COORDINATOR MET WITH FUANGCHALOEI JUNE 15. DISCUSSION CENTERED ON LOCAL SETTLEMENT. FUANGCHALOEI SEEMED TO WANT TO GIVE THE IMPRESSION THAT THE THAI ARE NOT RUSHING TO IMPLEMENT IT. ENS SUMMARY

2. WE OPENED BY INFORMING FUANCHALEEI THAT THE ATTORNEY GEN HAD AUTHORIZED A NEW PAROLE FOR 25,000 INDO CHINESE REFUGEES THE DAY BEFORE (RETEL). WE EXPLAINED THAT AT LEAST 15,000 OF THEM WOULD COME FROM THAILAND, OF WHOM 12,500 WOULD BE FROM THE INLAND CAMPS, AND AT LEAST 2500 FRO THE BOAT CAMPS. FUANCHALOEI SAID THAT ALTHOUGH THE NEWS IS GRATIFYING, HE RECALLED THAT THE VP HAS TOLD THE PM THAT THE US WOULD TAKE APPROX 20,000 OUT  
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OF THE NEW AUTHORIZATION. HE NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT THE VP HAD GIVEN A SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT FIGURE DURING HIS PRESS CONF THE NEXT DAY, WHEN HE SAID THAT THE US WOULD TAKE 15,000 TO 20,000.

3. LOWMAN ASKED FUANGCHALOEI ABOUT THAI PROSPECTS FOR LOCAL SETTLEMENT. FUANGCHALOEI SAID THAT THERE WERE TWO REASONS WHY LOCAL SETTLEMENT COULD NOT PROCEED AT THIS TIME. THE FIRST WAS

THAT TOO MUCH PUBLICITY HAD BEEN GIVEN THE US OFFER OF FUNDS FOR STUDY OF LOCAL SETTLEMENT POSSIBILITIES. HE PARENTHETICALLY COMMENTED THAT THE SUM WAS NOT A SIGNIFICANT ONE; THE THAI COULD EASILY PRODUCE TWO MILLION DOLLARS FROM THEIR OWN RESOURCES. THE SECOND REASON WAS THE INCREASING NUMBER OF INLAND REFUGEES. HE NOTED THAT THE PM HAD TOLD THE VP THAT THAILAND WOULD NOT FORCEFULLY REPATRIATE REFUGEES, BUT THE THAI "DON'T HAVE A BERLIN WALL." REFUGEES KEEP POURING IN AT THE RATE OF SOME 70 A DAY.

4. FUNANGCHALOEI THEN ASKED WHETHER THE US, ON A ONE-TIME BASIS, COULD TAKE A LARGE NUMBER OF INLAND REFUGEES IN ADDITION TO THE PLANNED QUOTA OF 12,500 PER YEAR OVER THE ENSUING YEARS. IF THE NUMBER OF INLAND REFUGEES IN THAILAND COULD GET DOWN TO AN ACCEPTABLE LEVEL, THE THAI WOULD BE PREPARED TO MOVE IMMEDIATELY TOWARD LOCAL SETTLEMENT. LOWMAN COUNTERED THAT IT WAS HARD TO CONVINCE THE AMERICAN PEOPLE AND GOVT TO DO MORE FOR INDOCHINESE REFUGEES UNLESS THE THAI FIRST STARTED ON LOCAL SETTLEMENT. WE RECOUNTED THE DOMESTIC CONSTRAINTS THAT HAD TO BE OVERCOME TO GET THE AUTHORIZATION FOR 25,000. WE POINTED OUT THAT THE CLIMATE IN THE US MIGHT NOT BE CONDUCIVE TO A LARGE NEW PROGRAM AT THIS TIME.

5. FUNANGCHALOEI SAID THAT IF THE THAI BEGIN LOCAL SETTLEMENT, THE RESULTING PUBLICITY WOULD ATTRACT GREAT NUMBERS OF ADDITIONAL REFUGEES TO THAILAND. LOWMAN ASKED WHETHER THE THAI COULD CONFIDENTIAL

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BEGIN WITH UNPUBLICIZED, SMALL PROJECTS. FUNANGCHALOEI REPLIED THAT JOURNALISTS WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY SEIZE ON THEM AND PRINT STORIES ABOUT THEM. HE ALSO CONTENDED THAT THERE WOULD BE HEAVY COSTS FOR THAILAND IN LOCALLY SETTLING ANY SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF REFUGEES. LOWMAN REPLIED THAT THE US AND OTHER COUNTRIES WOULD BE PREPARED TO HELP THE THAI WITH THESE EXPENSES.

6. COMMENT: WHILE THE DISCUSSION WAS FRIENDLY, IT WAS MARKED BY IMPASSE. THE THAI CANNOT UNDERTAKE LOCAL SETTLEMENT UNTIL THE NUMBERS OF REFUGEES GO DOWN. THE US DOES NOT HAVE A PERSUASIVE REASON FOR ACCEPTING MORE INLAND REFUGEES FROM THAILAND UNTIL THE THAI MOVE TOWARD LOCAL SETTLEMENT. THERE IS ALSO AN INCONSISTENCY IN FUNANGCHALOEI'S IMPLICATION THAT AN OFFER OF TWO MILLION DOLLARS FOR LOCAL SETTLEMENT IS DEMEANING TO THE THAI, WHEREAS MUCH MORE EXTENSIVE SUPPORT WOULD BE WELCOME. IMPASSE AND PARADOX ASIDE, FUNANGCHALOEI SEEMED TO WANT TO LEAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT THE THAI WILL NOT BE RUSHING INTO LOCAL SETTLEMENT.

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## Message Attributes

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**TAGS:** SREF, (FUNANGCHALOEI ANIRUTTHEWA), (LOWMAN, SHEPARD)  
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